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The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

Vol. XLII JANUARY, 1934 No. 7

HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR

I thank thee, Lord, for precious things
Which thou into my life hast brought;
More gratefully my spirit sings
It's thanks for all I yet have not.

How fair thy world to me has been!
How dear the friends who breathe its air!
But who can guess what waits within
Thine opening realms, thy worlds more fair?

At friendly shores, at peaceful isles
I touch, but may not long delay;
Where thy flushed East with mystery smiles
I steer into the unrisen day.

For veils of hope before thee drawn,
For mists that hint the immortal coast
Hid in thy farthest, faintest dawn,
My God, for these I thank thee most.

Joy, joy! to see, from every shore
Whereon my step makes pressure fond,
Thy sunrise reddening still before,—
More light, more love, more life beyond!

—*Lucy Larcom.*

THE GOLDEN DAY

There are two days in the week about which and upon which I do not worry,—two carefree days kept sacredly free from fear and apprehension. One of these days is Yesterday. Yesterday, with all its cares and frets, with all its pains and aches, all its faults, its mistakes, and blunders, has passed forever beyond the reach of my recall. I cannot undo an act that I wrought, I cannot unsay a word that I said, on Yesterday. All that it holds of my life, of wrong, regret and sorrow is in the hands of the Mighty Love, that can bring honey out of the rock, and sweet waters out of the bitterest desert,—the Love that can make the wrong things right, that can turn weeping into laughter, that can give beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, joy of the morning for the woe of the night.

Save for the beautiful memories, sweet and tender, that linger like the perfume of roses in the heart of the day that is gone, I have nothing to do with Yesterday. It was mine—it is God's.

And the other day I do not worry about is Tomorrow. Tomorrow, with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its perils, its large promise, and poor performance, its failures and mistakes, is as far beyond the reach of my mastery as its dead sister, Yesterday. It is a day of God's. Its sun will rise in roseate splendor or behind a mass of weeping clouds. But it will rise. Until then the same Love and Patience that held Yesterday hold Tomorrow. Save for the star of hope that gleams ever in the brow of Tomorrow, shining with tender promise into the heart of Today, I have no possession in that unborn day of grace. All else is in the safe keeping of the Infinite Love that is higher than the stars, wider than the skies, deeper than the seas. Tomorrow—it is God's day. It will be mine.

There is left for myself, then, but one day of the week,—Today. Any man can fight the battles of Today. Oh, friends, it is only when to the burdens and cares of Today, carefully measured out to us by the Infinite Wisdom and Might that gives with them the promise, "As thy day so shall thy strength be," we add the burdens of those two awful eternities—Yesterday and Tomorrow—such burdens only the Mighty God can sustain—that we break down. It isn't the experience

Publication Office
134 Summer Street, Boston, Mass.

Monthly, except August
50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents

Check, post-office order, or stamps should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange
25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Boston, Mass.

"Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103. Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 17, 1922."

of Today that drives men mad. It is the remorse for something that happened Yesterday, the dread of what Tomorrow may disclose. These are God's days. Leave them to Him. Therefore I think, I do, I journey, but one day at a time. That is the easy day. That is the man's day. Nay, rather, that is Our Day—God's and mine. And while faithfully and dutifully I run my course and work my appointed task on that day of Ours, God the Almighty and All-Loving takes care of Yesterday and Tomorrow.—Rev. Robert J. Burdette, D.D. (1844-1914).

TODAY

Every day is a fresh beginning;
Every morn is a world made new;
You who are weary of sorrow and sinning,
Here is a beautiful hope for you—
A hope for me and a hope for you.

Yesterday now is a part of forever
Bound up in a sheaf which God holds tight,
With glad days and sad days and bad days which never
Shall visit us more with their bloom or their blight,
Their fullness of sunshine or sorrowful blight.

Every day is a fresh beginning,
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain,
And spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted, and possible pain,
Take heart with the day, and begin again.

—*Susan Coolidge.*

BUILDING THE LADDER FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN

"Heaven is not reached with a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit, round by round."

Among a wandering tribe of Semites, who afterwards settled as farmers on a desert land, there is preserved a story of a divided family among the earliest ancestors. The father cared for the hunting son who gave him the delicious venison, and the mother thought most of the boy who dwelt at home. The mother schemed to secure a blessing that should have come to the hunter. Of course she succeeded, for what could a blind man and a hunter do against a woman's wit and a business brain that could always best in any bargain. So the blessing, to have corn and wine and servants, came to the Supplanter, Jacob. He was only a youth and was guided by a scheming mother, who caused the old unsuspecting father to send Jacob away, thinking this was his own plan for his son. (Has not many a husband given himself the credit for his wife's ideas?)

So Jacob traveled toward his mother's people, and when the sun had set he reached a certain place in which there was no shelter. He took a stone for his pillow and lay down to sleep. But a beautiful dream came to him in the night. There was a ladder reaching from lowly earth to high heaven, and upon this flight of steps were beautiful messengers of God ascending and descending. And as he dreamed he heard God promise to give him the land upon which he lay,—to him and to his descendants. Then Jacob awoke and said, "Surely the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not."

Thousands of years passed. This old story was kept among the sacred writing of a great people, and finally adopted into a sacred book of a world-encircling religion. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Sarah, a little baby girl,

was born in England. And when she became a woman she rewrote this story of the wandering boy in a beautiful hymn which has been an inspiration for millions of people. She saw and put into the dream a spiritual significance. There are two of the verses with which Sarah Flower Adams, a Unitarian woman, has blessed every denomination of Protestant Christians.

"Though like a wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone,
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer my God to thee,—
Nearer to thee!

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me
In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer my God to thee,—
Nearer to thee!"

It was many years before Jacob could see his home again. He did not see his father alive, for many years, and he suffered from fear of his brother Esau, for he remembered the wrong he had done him. He sent him great presents of the wealth of the country, cattle, flocks, and herds, but when Esau saw him he forgot the old wrong, and ran and fell on his brother's neck and kissed him. Yet Jacob feared his brother, for conscience doth make cowards of us all.

Finally Isaac died, being an old man, one hundred and eighty years of age. And the two brothers, Esau and Jacob, buried him; for not only life but death brings us together.

God gives us in dreams of the night, when homeless, tired and discouraged, a vision of a ladder from earth to heaven, from the material base to the heavenly summit. Men have always dreamed of making this earth more like heaven, of turning the gaze upward from the mechanical toys to the heavenly joys. Our country has been passing through deep waters. Is it time now to be discouraged or shall we lift up our eyes? President Roosevelt said to the National Conference of Catholic Charities:

"In the midst of problems of material things—in the machine age of invention, of finance, of international suspicion and renewed armaments—every one of us must gain satisfaction and strength in the knowledge that social justice is becoming an ever growing factor and influence in almost every part of the world. With every passing year I become more confident that humanity is moving forward to the practical application of the teachings of Christianity as they affect the individual lives of men and women."

In one way or another, in many cults and religious groups, we have been preaching social justice and the golden rule. We have now caught the social vision of applied social ethics, to make it easier to do right and harder to do wrong, believing that the vision of Utopia will come nearer if we change our social standards to brotherhood. In many ways it is new ethics; in other ways it is the vision of an old ladder, reaching from earth to heaven.

"Wings for the angels, but feet for the men!
We may borrow the wings to find the way—
We may hope and resolve and aspire and pray,
But our feet must rise, or we fall again."

(Written for The Cheerful Letter by Carlyle Summerbell, Tampa, Fla.)

WORDS WITHOUT MUSIC

The quiet things know best
The strength in solitude;
The plow upturned, the gulls
That in gray silence brood.
The frightened hare that slips
Behind the grassy mound;
Dark, secret roots of trees
Snaring the stubborn ground;
All these know that in peace
Is heard the delicate beat
Of stanzas set by time
On soft, unmeasured feet.

—Eleanor Alletta Chaffee.

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

MRS. JOHN A. MCCADDIN, *Chairman*, 21 Ashfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

A correspondent writing to the Exchange for the first time should always give as reference the name and address of her minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

APPEALS

1. Mrs. Lee M. Kilby sends thanks to those who have remembered her in the past, and to the one who is sending her the magazine. She hopes that the dear friends will send her some reading matter, scraps, and embroidery thread. Her little children would be pleased with cards, picture books and toys of any kind.

2. Mrs. M. D. Hill, R. 2, Marshville, N. C., who has been a member of the Exchange for over twenty-five years, hopes that someone will send her some pieces for her quilts. She sends thanks for all that has been done for her but hasn't heard from anyone for a long time.

3. It has been very lonely the past two years as my dear companion was killed in a car wreck and I was seriously injured which has left me crippled from a broken hip and back. I have two little girls, 8 and 4 years of age. The oldest one is in school now. I would appreciate quilt scraps, or good reading, also picture books and cards for the children. Mrs. Cassie Hawn, Chelsea, Okla.

4. I thank you all for the past kindnesses. My family and I have enjoyed the nice cheery letters, magazines which have been received, also the packages of quilt scraps. Oh, I certainly appreciate them so much. I hope that they will continue to remember us in any little way as it means so much to us. Reading, quilt scraps and thread would be greatly appreciated to pass the long winter days as I am lonesome without something to do in the winter time. Mrs. Emma Plowman, R. 3, Wadesboro, N. C.

5. As it has been quite a while since I have heard from any of the *Cheerful Letter* friends, I am writing to ask if some one will please send some magazines suitable for my sons, the youngest one is 15 years of age. They especially like stories of adventure. I should be so very glad of some quilt scraps and some stamping patterns if some friend has them to send. I love to embroider and pass many lonely hours at it. Mrs. J. T. Wilmer, Lynchburg, Va.

6. Mrs. Zola T. Godfrey, Rupert, Ark., writes that her family and she, herself, would enjoy some reading and sewing material.

7. It would bring much cheer and help to me, a shut-in for many years, to have letters and stamps so that I may answer all who write to me, also small lots of yarn as I knit little mittens. Pieces to make up into aprons would help as I use

my hands. Alma Newcomb, So. Brewer, Maine.

8. It has been almost two years since I have written to the Exchange. I want to thank the one who subscribes for the Ladies' Home Journal for me for the last year. I get lonely shut in in the winter time. I would be glad of some quilt pieces and some embroidery thread. My youngest daughter would enjoy some good books. Mrs. Ellen Washington, Endicott, Va.

9. I want to thank the many friends who have been so nice to me in the past. I live a right good distance from anyone and as my health is not what it should be, I do not get out much. I have two children, a girl 4 years old and a little boy 2. I would like some little story books and some cards for them and quilt pieces, embroidery thread, patterns and reading for myself. Mrs. Dewey Duncan, Stella, Va.

10. I am not able to do much work on account of neuralgia. I am 58 years old and can't get out much in the winter, so I would appreciate bits of crochet and embroidery thread, also quilt pieces to help pass away the lonely hours. Rose Tyne, Lansing, N. C.

11. Mrs. Hettie Hall, Endicott, Va., asks for some reading for herself and for her husband, also thread, bits of ribbons or anything in the fancy-work line.

12. It has been a long time since I heard from any of the *Cheerful Letter* friends. I would be glad to hear from them again. I am kept at home most of the time as my husband's father and mother are with us. They are 85 and 86 years old. Any cheer that is sent to us will be greatly appreciated. Mrs. S. E. O'Neal, R. 3, Atkins, Arkansas.

13. I wish to thank the one who has sent to me through the *Cheerful Letter*, as I am an invalid, and anything helps to pass off the lonely hours. I would appreciate some more pieces and also some stamped pieces and embroidery thread. I would like a birthday shower on January 16th. Mrs. Tom Saunders, Tellico Plains, Tenn.

14. I haven't heard from any of the *Cheerful Letter* friends for some time. I hope that I am not forgotten. I would appreciate some pieces of ribbon and bits of thread of any kind, and some broken strings of beads. Mrs. Annie Thompson, R. 1, Box 224, Farmville, Va.

15. I wish to thank all those who have sent me reading and scraps. It has been so much help to me and my husband. We are both old and feeble and can't get about much. I will soon be 75 years old and my husband is the same age. We will be very thankful to be remembered in the future. Mrs. Bettie Hundley, R. 2, Stuart, Va.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Mrs. T. S. Sigmon from Dodson to Buffalo Ridge, Va.

Mrs. Retha Howell from Jefferson to Bina, N. C.

Mrs. Fuchsia Bauer from Corwell to Lurton, Ark.

DEATHS

Miss Lulu M. Thompson, Tatum, Va.

MARRIAGES

Miss Lillian Hale, R. 3, Box 43, Ferrum, Va., is now Mrs. Lillian Guilliams, R. 2, Callaway, Va.

YOU ARE RICHER THAN YOU WERE THIS MORNING IF—

You have laughed often.

You have given something.

You have forgiven even more.

You have made a new friend today.

You have made stepping-stones of stumbling blocks.

You have thought more in terms of "thyself" than "myself."

You managed to be cheery even if you seemed to be weary.

You took time to trace the handiwork of God in the commonplace things of life.

You have learned to count out things that do not really count.

You have been a little blinder to the faults of friend and foe.

A little child has smiled at you and a stray dog licked your hand. —*Clipped.*

TELLING THE BEAVER STORY

By WILLIAM H. CARR

Through the Palisades Interstate Park in New York runs a state road from which a thriving beaver colony can be viewed. At almost any hour of the day or night automobiles may be seen parked near by

"They use their tails as trowels to pat down the mud," say most parents while initiating their wide-eyed children into the mysteries of nature lore. So we had a large sign prepared in the Trailside Museum reading:

> Beaver DO NOT use their tails as trowels! They are not used as ferries for the transportation of mud or stones, either!

To answer the query, "What are their tails used for?" we had this label.

> The most important use of the beaver's tail is as a seat for its owner. It serves as a prop to brace the animal when cutting down trees and is often extended forward in a manner enabling the beaver to actually use it as a pad or cushion when resting. The tail is also used to strike or "whack" the water as a signal to other beaver that danger is near. Still another use is that of a rudder and a "sculling oar" in swimming, particularly under water.

We have learned that one way of arousing enthusiasm in natural history exposition is to provoke arguments. Here are some signs, that, more than once, caused discussion.

> Trees do not necessarily "fall the way beaver want them to." In fact beaver are sometimes unable to cause trees to fall in any direction whatsoever, even though the trunks are severed. Falling trees often lodge against their neighbors and remain comparatively upright for years.
>
> Fish have no place on the beaver's bill of fare. The rodents subsist upon bark, aquatic plants, leaves and grasses. They are strict vegetarians.
>
> Beaver do carry stones. The monkey-like forepaws and the chin are used in this operation. Often the beaver moves stones by the simple expedient of pushing them along with its head.

One day a blind man appeared at the Trailside Museum, led by a thoughtful boy. As the two elbowed their way about the boy would read labels aloud and describe various exhibit details to the best of his ability. His less fortunate companion made intelligent remarks about the snakes, fish, plants and minerals on display. After a time the couple paused before our beaver exhibit.

Here a supporting stand had been made of timber actually cut and peeled by beaver. Tooth marks in the log sections were very plain. On the stand was a colored plaster-of-Paris model of a typical beaver colony. At one side was a mounted beaver skull.

We walked over to aid the boy in explaining.

"Please take my hand and 'show' me what is here," said the blind man.

We did as he wished and noticed at once how sensitive were the fingers long used to the reading of Braille. First we directed him to the beaver skull.

"What powerful teeth!" was his comment. "I can readily understand how the animals can fell trees." After a pause, he asked the question so often forthcoming from people who are not denied vision.

"Why do beaver cut down trees, anyway?"

As our model was made partly to answer this question we next guided the inquisitive fingers downward to where the object rested. We indicated the pond house or lodge and the miniature bank house made of twigs glued together and placed half on the bank and half in the water. We read the convenient label:

> The beaver has many reasons for felling trees. The bark is eaten, so are many of the leaves. The prone trees are cut into sections averaging two and a half feet in length and laboriously dragged to the pond where they are used either in house or dam construction.
>
> In the fall smaller trees are cut down, ferried with bark intact to a po-

sition near the house and there anchored under water to serve as a winter food supply. The beaver does not hibernate. It must have food even though ice may prevent going ashore for weeks at a time.

Our blind pupil then asked another common question.

"Why do beavers go to all the trouble of making a pond? I should think that they could live on land in a den and feed easily enough wherever there were forests."

Once again a sign came to the fore:

The beaver is perfectly at home in the water. On land, however, it falls an easy prey to wolves, bears and foxes. The heavy hindquarters, flat tail, and webbed hind feet prevent rapid locomotion. Only in water is the beaver safe from nearly all marauders except the otter.

The blind man remarked that the beaver house was about as high above water as below, and we explained that although beaver could remain under water for several minutes at a time, they were by no means fish. Five minutes is an unusually long time for a beaver to be submerged, as we have observed.

We have often been asked about beaver sounds. Yes, beaver do make noises—not only when feeding, either. Many times we have heard adults expel air through their nostrils with just the suggestion of a "snort."

Many of our guests were amused by the beaver's feeding habits. The kittens, especially, remind one of piccolo players in their expert use of handlike forepaws which hold the sticks and turn them as the teeth rapidly chew off succulent bark. The crisp, efficient sound reminds one of the vibrations caused by clapping one's hands rapidly, using only the finger tips in the process.

Our experience in sharing and promoting beaver knowledge extends over a number of years. Many are the devices we have used to forward the study. Once we built a little tree house in the wide branches of a large maple tree on the edge of a beaver pond. It was real sport to stay up there on bright moonlight nights and watch the shining ripples of the beaver's comings and goings. Although not quite in keeping with the general esthetic spirit of the evening's program, we would sometimes play the mean trick of breaking the main beaver dam. The hole was usually about two feet wide and two deep. When a beaver discovered the leak, he would make repairs immediately. Often the breach would be invisible in the space of 20 minutes.

Our tree-top perch enabled us to watch the beaver swimming under water in the late afternoon. We could see to best advantage how swiftly the large, brown body could travel. As a rule not a ripple was in evidence, nor did bubbles mark the swimmer's progress; yet the animal seemed perfectly aware of surface disturbance near by. As he swam toward us, we would drop a small branch some ten feet ahead of him. Instantly his course would be altered. We found it possible to make the beaver swim in circles under water by throwing small stones in front of him. Each time he sensed the splash, he would change his swimming direction and move away from the source of disturbance. Night after night we devised schemes and systems of experiment until it is a wonder the beaver did not cut down our observatory and throw us into the pond!

Despite the annoyance we caused, we nevertheless learned many things, at first hand, that books had failed to tell us. We were exceedingly thankful in later years that we had spent these fruitful hours beside beaver ponds.—*Condensed from Natural History.*

AGE

Age is a quality of mind;
If you've left your
Dreams behind,
If Hope is cold,
If you no longer look ahead,
If your ambition fires
Are dead,
Then you are old.

—*Anon.*

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

I will not judge a fellow man again;
Those stains that I had seen and criticized,
Then turned away with feelings of disdain,
Proved honor scars that were by owners prized
Because in conflict won, scars that remain
As witnesses to triumphs realized.

From judging fellow man I will refrain;
Through ignorance I have not recognized
That falls are often helps to heights attain,
By bitter battles fought, not compromised.

That my own ignorance I may restrain,
Defeats of others shall be minimized;
As comrades stumble, fall and rise again
Only their conquests shall be emphasized.

And I will help discouraged ones obtain
Relief from ills their ignorance devised;
That their own heritage they may regain
With a courage and spirit vitalized.

—*Charles Dutton.*

ON TIME IN MEXICO

That morning the Rio Grande was only an imaginary boundary line, although our train crossed it over the international bridge, and pulled up, a few yards beyond, at the battered station of Ciudad Juarez. "All baggage opened for inspection," came the command.

We stopped for hours at Juarez; there was no sign of rush. All who had trunks followed their leisurely removal to the baggage room, for an unhurried inspection. Some changed dollars into pesos (about three for one). Some walked up and down the long platform, looking at the native vendors' trays of fruit, candied sweet potatoes, preserved cactus and the ubiquitous leche quemada, which, being interpreted, is a caramel fondant in various shapes and disguises, invariably palatable.

The tops of the cars nearest the engine were crowded with khaki-clad soldiers, prepared to protect the train in any untoward emergency. Through the windows of the day coaches leaned men, women and children, talking to friends below. On the rattan seats behind were piled bed rolls, baskets of food, birds in cages, flowers growing in tin cans.

"Vamanos!" called the Mexican porter. We rushed to climb aboard and fifteen minutes — or more — later, with much hand waving, and the oft repeated Spanish admonition to "go with God," our train jerked on its way. The tracks run south across gently rising plains that end only against the horizon in ragged peaks.

"Can we reach Chihuahua on time?" I ask the affable conductor, who, with a watchful auditor beside him, takes my ticket.

"But why not?" Mentally, I divide two hundred twenty-five miles by the scheduled eight hours, plus. Our gait seems fairly adequate, but our stops!

The engineer, spying a box car ahead or a solitary adobe hut, pulls up and we discover that he is not tarrying solely to admire the flowers growing in old gasoline cans beside the door; but has known that a black-lettered board proclaims this to be the station of Mesa, or Tierra Blanca, or Ojo Caliente. Having added perceptibly to the joy of existence on the prairie, we start off once more. But, of course, we must stop again and pay our respects to Candelaria, where Gerónimo, the old Indian warrior, and his men held out even longer than we seem to be doing.

At Lucero we do not question the prolonged delay. From here a short spur runs supplies into the hills; and, if we continue to wait, may be back with ore from the mines. By the middle of the afternoon we see green trees ahead, a water tank, brown dwellings—and it all becomes Montezuma.

"Twenty minutes for luncheon," apologizes the conductor, and hurries out with the train crew and others who have eschewed the club car. The adobe restaurant has a garden adjoining, where

tame deer nibble in an inclosed run.

Under our windows come women, a child in one arm, a basket in the other, more children clinging to their skirts, lean dogs at heel. We are besought to buy frijoles spread over tortillas, hunks of goat meat, swimming in earthenware dishes, milk in bottles with rag stoppers.

Overhead whirs the passenger-mail plane, covering its last lap from Mexico City to El Paso.

At last, the lunchers replete, we are off again. Hundreds of birds rise from an old corn field and circle toward a narrow lake beyond,—ducks, geese, perhaps the less edible crane.

As the shadows of the mountains stretch farther across the rolling mesas, we pass group after group of campers beside the road. They have emerged from their dilapidated cars and trucks, piled high with every sort of household treasure, and are making fires of mesquite roots and branches, on which to cook and by which to warm during the long winter night. This is the return of the native, these are the repatriados, sent back by the United States Government to the place from whence they came.

In the distance loom the hills where, over fourscore years ago, other weary wanderers from the north made their camp. When the news of this American invasion reached Chihuahua, her citizens, with wives and sweethearts and the day's repast, sallied forth to make a picnic and an incidental rout of the uninvited visitors. But events befell quite otherwise.

And now the glory of the ending day shuts out the past and all else that is present. Its flames reach up and crimson the heavens, long after the sun has dropped behind the ragged mountain tops.

"There is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars," but we are not allowed to see them from a train in Mexico.

It is an unwritten law, perhaps a written one, that windows must be covered as soon as the lights are on in the cars. The porter pulls down the shades of my section and wipes part of the long-passed sand dunes from the sills.

My friendly conductor calls a welcome promise that we are reaching Chihuahua, and to me he murmurs, triumphantly: "You must admit that we are in good time."

Only one hour behind schedule is not late in Mexico.—*Christian Science Monitor.*

MISUNDERSTOOD

Could we but draw back the curtains
That surround each other's lives,
See the naked heart and spirit,
Know what spur the action gives;
Often we would find it better,
Purer than we judged we should,
And we'd love each other better
If we only understood.

Could we judge all deeds by motives,
See the good and bad within;
Often we would love the sinner
All the while we loathe the sin;
Could we know the powers working
To overthrow integrity,
We should judge each other's errors
With more patient charity.

If we knew the cares and trials,
Knew the effort, all in vain,
And the bitter disappointments,
Understood the loss and gain;
Would the grim external roughness
Seem, I wonder, just the same;
Should we help where we now hinder,
Should we pity where we blame?

Ah! We judge each other harshly,
Knowing not life's hidden force,
Knowing not the fount of action
Is less turbid at its source;
Seeing not among the evil
All the golden grains of good;
Oh, we'd love each other better—
If we only understood.

—*Author Unknown.*

Together is the most inspiring word in the English language.

Coming together means beginning.

Keeping together means progress.

Working together means success.

—*Edward Everett Hale.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE HAPPINESS BAG

"Mother," said Betty Ann one day, "please may I have a happiness bag? Mary Jane has one."

Mother did not answer Betty Ann's question at once. She wanted time to think. Mother realized that her little girl would never be truly happy to have just whatever Mary Jane had. But Mother was wise. She decided it would be better if Betty Ann found this out for her very own self. So she quietly answered, "Yes, dear, you shall have a lovely new happiness bag."

Betty Ann clapped her hands for joy and ran to tell the good news to her friend. Mary Jane was ever so pleased about it. "Oh, I'm so glad you have earned a happiness bag, too," she exclaimed happily.

Betty Ann didn't know just what Mary Jane meant by "earning," nor did she bother to find out. The joy of a happiness bag, she thought, was in owning one. But Mother's gift for some reason didn't make Betty Ann happy at all. It seemed to make her very cross. She was cross because she couldn't see why the bag didn't bring her happiness. She was even cross because Mary Jane was so happy.

Then Mother thought that the time had come for her to make a suggestion. "Betty Ann," Mother said very lovingly, "have you ever asked Mary Jane why she had a happiness bag?"

"No," Betty Ann answered slowly, "I haven't. She talked about earning one once, and I suppose that had something to do with it. Perhaps I'll ask her."

Mary Jane was glad later to tell Betty Ann all about her happiness bag. "You see," she explained carefully, "when I was visiting Aunt Kate this summer, I was always happy if I could do anything to help her. Soon Aunt Kate began to call me her happiness girl, and just before I came home, she gave me a small package. You can guess what was in that package, can't you? And when I opened it, I found a note inside saying, 'Because you have been so happy, you have earned the right to call this bag your little happiness bag!' Wasn't I pleased! And do you know, Betty Ann, I've gone right on always trying to be happy. 'A happiness bag for a happiness girl,' Uncle Ben said."

Betty Ann told Mother the story of Mary Jane's bag. "And now, Mother," she said, "I think I understand. I should never have asked you for a bag. The one you gave me couldn't ever be a really truly happiness bag because I didn't do my part to make it so. I wasn't helpful and I wasn't happy. I didn't try the least bit to earn the name of happiness for it. Would you take it back, Mother, until you can call your little girl a happiness girl?"

Mother willingly took the bag again and was oh, so happy. She knew that Betty Ann had already taken the right step toward earning her first happiness bag.—*Christian Science Monitor.*

WHEN MOTHER READS ALOUD

When mother reads aloud, the past
  Seems real as every day;
I hear the tramp of armies vast,
I see the spears and lances cast,
  I join the thrilling fray;
Brave knights and ladies fair and proud
I meet, when mother reads aloud.

When mother reads aloud, far lands
  Seem very near and true;
I cross the desert's gleaming sands
Or hunt the jungle's prowling bands,
  Or sail the ocean blue;
Far heights, whose peaks the cold mists shroud,
I scale, when mother reads aloud.

When mother reads aloud, I long
  For noble deeds to do—
To help the right, redress the wrong;
It seems so easy to be strong,
  So simple to be true.
Oh, thick and fast the visions crowd
My eyes when mother reads aloud!

—*St. Nicholas.*

ETHELRED EEL

Ethelred Eel was late again! Like the famous king of England with the same name, he never could be ready in time, and today, as usual, when the family went out for an early morning swim, he was left behind to finish his breakfast.

"Never mind," he thought, as he raced after his dear parents and his wriggly brothers and sisters, that last fourteen and a half minutes in bed was worth it!"

Being so pleased with himself, he quite forgot to look which way he was swimming, and soon he had reached unknown waters.

"Come," exclaimed Ethelred Eel, "this is interesting!" He felt rather glad he had been an unready eel that morning.

But when he had swum for several hours, Ethelred began to wonder if he was as clever as he seemed.

"The question is," he said thoughtfully, "am I coming or going?"

He swam round in a circle to consider.

"It does make a difference," he added, "when one thinks about getting home for meals, and bed, and things like that."

Then, just as he was coming to the end of the circle, he noticed a hollow thing rather the shape of himself.

"That," he decided, "may be a secret passage leading to the Eelery."

He swam in, and hoped it was.

Ethelred Eel went along very smoothly, and as he met nobody and nothing he thought it must be a very secret passage.

"It certainly was clever of me to have found this, anyway," he told himself (not minding about boasting now, when no brothers and sisters could hear and laugh).

At last he came to the end, but he didn't seem anywhere near home, and all he saw was another round and hollow thing, but not nearly as big.

"Well?" he asked himself, and answered, "Yes, I will."

Ethelred Eel wriggled his way down that, too—and for a long, long time nobody saw him again!

Meanwhile, at the Eelery a whole day had passed, and the Eel children had been sent to bed (not feeling a bit pleased because Ethelred was staying up so much later than the rest of them).

"My dear Emily," said Mr. Eel to his wife, at last, "I think I must go and find that child!"

So he tied his bright blue and yellow muffler round his neck, and set out. Fortunately, he took the same way as Ethelred, and presently he came to the big hollow thing.

"A water pipe," said Mr. Eel, and almost swam on, only something stopped him

"Children do hide in such queer places," he thought, and turned down it (though, of course, he never really expected to find Ethelred there).

He wasn't, either; but when Mr. Eel got to the other end of the large pipe, such a knocking and banging and hammering was going on at the little pipe that branched out from it. And before Mr. Eel had time to ask what it all meant part of the pipe came to pieces, and out wriggled Ethelred.

"Oh, there you are," said Mr. Eel.

"Yes, here I am," answered Ethelred. Let's get home quickly—they don't seem pleased about me here."

As they swam along, he explained how he had been stuck for the whole day in that little pipe, which led to somebody's bathroom, so that no one could get any water (much less have a bath), till the pipe was broken for him to come out.

"Well, I expect you'll remember this," said Mr. Eel (wisely refraining from pointing out that it should be a lesson to Ethelred, and so on).

"Yes, I expect I shall, thank you," answered his son.

And for quite a week afterward he wasn't late once! — *Christian Science Monitor.*

"Well, God loves patience; souls that dwell in stillness
Doing the little things and resting quite,
May just as perfectly fulfil her mission—
Be just as pleasing in the Father's sight."

FAITH

With constant faith, surpassing doubt,
I stand and watch the tide run out;
That 't will come back, I say to you,
I do not know,—and yet I do.

At eventide I see the day
Put night on guard, and go away;
Will morning come, the mists to woo?
I do not know,—and yet I do.

I see the sere that autumns bring.
Will verdure come with waking spring?
My faith alone can answer true—
I do not know,—and yet I do.

We see the loved ones droop and die.
Hath Heaven a brighter life on high?
Is Death the vale that leads thereto?
I do not know,—and yet I do.

—*Anon.*

A PRAYER

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces, let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonored, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep. Amen.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

Time spent in getting even would be better spent in getting ahead.

Father: "It's a good plan, my dear, always to think before you speak."

Daughter: "But, dad, when I do that the girls have changed the subject."—*Boston Transcript.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

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Meetings at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at 10.30 A.M. the first Friday of each month from October to May inclusive.

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